(b) if so, what is the total quantity (with value) of edible oils which have become unfit for consumption due to long storage;

(c) what are the reasons for not disposing of the edible oil within the reasonable time; and

(d) whether Government have made any inquiry into the negligence causing huge loss to Government, if so, what is the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) to (d) Under MIO, the NDDB is required to procure and stock oils and carry inventory of oils to lean season. Whenever the availability of edible oils improves, the stocks of oil under MIO have to be carried forward for a much longer period. This alongwith the accumulation of bottom cargo over a period, at times, results in certain quantity of low quality oils which, though unfit for direct human consumption, can be used after refining. All feasible precautions have been taken by NDDB to ensure that maximum stocks under MIO are disposed of as quality edible oils.

Starvation Deaths near Amravati (Maharashtra)

109. DR. BAPU KALDATE
SMT. KAMLA SINHA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the large number of starvation deaths of tribal children near Amravati (Maharashtra);

(b) if so, whether any assessment of the situation has been made by a Central team;

(c) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(d) what measures have been taken by Government to deal with the situation and to provide adequate Central assistance to the State Government of Maharashtra to implement the programme to meet the problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Incentives to Tobacco Farmers in Andhra Pradesh

110. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the incentives being considered to assist tobacco farmers in increasing their yield per acre and quality of tobacco grown in Andhra Pradesh; and

(b) whether any financial incentives will be offered to farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) and (b) The Tobacco Board in the Ministry of Commerce has been implementing tobacco schemes for increasing the yield and quality of tobacco in Andhra Pradesh. Financial assistance in the shape of subsidy is being given under above schemes to the tobacco farmers for the implementation of various components such as pest & disease control, sprinkler sets, suckercides, balanced fertilisation, roof insulation of barns, furnance sets etc.

Production of Pulses in the Country

111. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up a mission oriented programme to increase production of pulses in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to boost production of pulses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL